SSDC CUSTOMER CARE TREE POLICY

FOR SSDC OWNED TREES, WE WILL ENDEAVOUR TO:

- Maintain our trees in a safe condition
- Prune our trees when they are causing an actual nuisance, i.e. damage to buildings (advise the customer to contact their household insurer if there are cracks in a wall)

TREE WORKS THE COUNCIL ARE NOT ABLE TO DO:

- Prune privately owned trees
- Prune trees back because they are overhanging
- Systematically prune trees to control their size or height
- Prune or remove trees in order to improve light (if the trees are evergreen in a line of two or more, refer call to Tree Officer – Phil Poulton – 01935 462670)
- Prune or remove trees to improve a view
- Prune or remove trees because of falling leaves, sap, seeds or debris
- Prune or remove trees to improve television or satellite reception

COMMON TREE RELATED ENQUIRIES – HOW WE ASSIST

If the customer is concerned about:

- Electricity cables (trees interfering with) - Scottish and Southern Power – 0845 7708090
- South West Electricity Board – 0845 6012989
- Telephone wires - 'B.T. Faults' – 0800 800151
- Trees threatening or obstructing the Highway (including pavements) - Somerset County Council Highways – 0300 123 2224
- Trees obstructing streetlights - Somerset County Council Streetlight Department – 01823 423366
- Trees obstructing Rights of Way (ROW); Somerset County Council Highways – 0300 123 2224
- High evergreen hedges – Refer to Tree Officer – 01935 462670
- Nesting birds and roosting bats – Contact the Police – 101
- Trees within the Country Parks – Katy Menday, Countryside – 01935 462522
- If the customer is unsure about which arborist to employ, helpful consumer advice and directories are available at: www.trees.org.uk

DOING THE WORK YOURSELVES

In common law, a property owner can cut back overhanging branches to the boundary of their property. SSDC will usually have no objection to property owners carrying out this type of tree works or engaging a contractor at their own expense, **providing**:

- Access is not gained via Council land or trees without written permission of the Council's Senior Land and Property Officer (Diane Layzell) – 01935 462058
- The tree is not situated within a Conservation Area or subject to a Tree Preservation Order – refer to Tree Officer on 01935 462670
- That any work to the tree is not detrimental to its health or stability and is carried out in accordance with British Standard 3998: 2010 – Tree Works
- That the cut branches are disposed of in a responsible manner and that no unauthorised damage to Council property occurs